

An Examen for a Time of Crisis

An examen is a structured prayer originally created by [Ignatius of Loyola](#) in which we are led to prayerfully reflect on our lives by focusing on being present to God and asking God to search our hearts and guide our steps.

1. Remind yourself that you are in **God's presence**. Light a candle. Ground your feet. Still your mind and heart. **Give thanks** for God's grace in your life. Give thanks for God's love for all who have been made in God's image.
2. Pray for the grace to **understand how God is at work** in and around you. "*With the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other,*" consider and imagine how God is at work in your life and around us.

What prayers of petition and protest rise up in your spirit by the Spirit? What is happening around me that is giving me cause to rejoice with those who are rejoicing and grieve with those who are in grief and danger?

3. **Review your day** ... Ask God to search your heart and mind. In this Epiphany season, ask for God's light to open up the ordinary and routine moments of your day to God's power and presence.
4. **Reflect on what you did, said, or thought** in those instances. Were you drawing closer to God or further away?

What do you need to open myself up to God's healing and correction?

Where do you need to undergo a process of purification from sinful desires of violence, revenge, or animosity?

Have you, in small, practical, individual and communal ways been a part of peacemaking and hospitality for Christ's kingdom?

Have you, today, grown in your desire and capacity to be a good neighbor?

Have you, today, grown in your connection with neighbors and your neighborhood?

Take a few moments to repent and ask for forgiveness where it is needed, and then celebrate with God where you see growth and transformation.

5. **Look toward tomorrow** — think of how you might grow practically in both experiencing and expressing Christ's hope, healing, and hospitality.

Ask for forgiveness for ways that you've fallen short. Seek reconciliation, apology, and redress for places where you've hurt or ruptured a relationship. Reach out to someone in need. Form a personal connection with those who are least, last, lost, littlest, and closest to death in your direct sphere of influence.

Conclude by praying the Lord's Prayer